DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 314 609 CE 053 960

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TITLE An Investigation of Trainer Certification (Preparation) Programs in the Private Sector.
PUB DATE Dec 89
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at the American Vocational Association Convention (Orlando, FL, December 1989).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administration; Adult Education; *Corporate Education; Labor Force Development; Management Development; On the Job Training; *Program Implementation; *Staff Development; Standards; *Teacher Certification; Teacher Qualifications; *Trainers

ABSTRACT

As part of a larger 2-year study of the nature of excellent vocational educators who work in business and industry, this paper describes what has been learned from a number of case studies about trainer "certification" (preparation) programs in business and industry. More specifically, the paper describes the processes used to certify trainers and knowledge and skills taught in certification programs conducted in five companies headquartered in Illinois. The companies include Deere and Company, Commonwealth Edison Company--Production Training Center, Arthur Andersen and Company, Bellcore TEC, and Allstate Insurance Company. For each training company, the report provides a company profile and a description of the trainer preparation/certification process. The report also identifies competencies taught in the company-sponsored trainer certification programs and summarizes the processes used in these programs. (KC)

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AN INVESTIGATION OF TRAINER CERTIFICATION (PREPARATION) PROGRAMS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

1989 American Vocational Association Convention
Orlando, Florida

New and Related Services Section, Customized Business and Industry Training Services (CBITS), and National Association of Industrial and Technical Teacher Educators (NAITTE).

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AN INVESTIGATION OF TRAINER CERTIFICATION (PREPARATION) PROGRAMS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

INTRODUCTION

This paper should be viewed in the context of a broader topic. Information presented in the paper was collected as part of a larger two year National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE) project underway at the University of Illinois. The purpose of that project is to study the nature of excellent vocational educators who work in business and industry settings, including the professional knowledge and skills (i.e., pedagogical expertise) which contribute to their excellence. In addition, the project will assess the extent to which current vocational teacher education programs provide the identified knowledge and skills.

During the first year of the project, three approaches have been used to collect information regarding the knowledge and skills needed by vocational educators working in the business community:

1. A comprehensive review of research was conducted to determine what is known regarding the knowledge and skills deemed necessary for success;

2. A survey of private sector training managers was conducted to develop a profile (i.e., personality traits and motivation factors) of excellent trainers; and

3. Case studies were conducted of selected corporations headquartered in Illinois to determine how they insure the quality of their trainers.

This paper describes what has been learned from a number of the case studies about trainer "certification" (preparation) programs in business and industry. More specifically, the paper provides a description of processes used to certify trainers and knowledge and skills taught in certification programs conducted in five companies headquartered in Illinois.

TRAINER CERTIFICATION

The concept of some type of national certification for training and development personnel has often been linked to the notion of professionalism. In fact, certification can be described as the means of sorting the competent from the incompetent (i.e., individuals who are qualified to perform the duties associated with their respective roles from those who are not) within a field. In addition certification provides a framework for the advancement of the profession (Galbraith and Gilley, 1986).

Galbraith and Gilley, in a 1986 monograph titled Professional Certification: Implications for Adult Education and HRD, described the status of professional certification for business and industry trainers. They indicated that HRD practitioners as a group have not established a fully accepted body of knowledge nor identified an agreed upon set of competencies needed in the field; both of which are prerequisites to establishing a professional certification program.

Formal certification programs exist for vocational educators working in the public schools, but that is not the case for vocational educators working in the business community. Many universities, colleges, institutes, and private firms which offer programs to prepare individuals for training and development positions in business and industry grant their own certificates. However, no formal, universally accepted trainer certification programs exist. Many companies do, however, "certify" the quality of their own trainers. Concern for trainer preparation is common within the business community, but how companies insure trainer quality varies somewhat.

Based on a desire or need to assure the quality of their trainers, there appears to be an increasing number of company-sponsored "trainer certification" programs. Following is a brief description of trainer certification programs in five companies headquartered in Illinois.

DEERE AND COMPANY

Company Profile

Deere and Company, headquartered in Moline, Illinois, is the free world's largest producer of farm equipment, a leader in the manufacture of equipment used in the construction and forestry industries, and a major producer of grounds care equipment.

Training at Deere is very decentralized. It is delivered primarily throughout the various units that make up the company (e.g., manufacturing, marketing, etc.). The focus of this description is on the Management Education and Training Section - which has the overall responsibility of improving the effectiveness of present and potential managers. Programs and courses are conducted by Management Education and Training Section staff or by unit trainers who have been "certified" by the Management Education and Training Section. Today, Deere and Company has approximately 85 certified trainers conducting programs.

Certified Trainer Process

The Certified Trainer Process was developed in 1984 to train selected people (nominated from within the units) to conduct Management Education and Training programs at the unit level. The process has three phases.

In phase 1 participants must successfully complete the Effective Training Skills Program. This involves taking the Teaching Techniques Course and the Certified Trainer Workshops.

Teaching Techniques is a five day course for individuals who have a teaching assignment upcoming within three months where emphasis is placed on skills that help increase student involvement and interaction. Participants are given the opportunity to conduct short sessions each day, three of which are videotaped and critiqued.

In addition to the Teaching Techniques course, individuals must also attend Certified Trainer Workshops. These workshops are designed to provide additional skills necessary to effectively conduct particular programs desired within the individual's unit. Examples of workshops offered include: Writing Skills, Facilitator Skills, Customer Service, Participative Management, etc. Individuals can be certified in any one or a combination of the workshops.

As part of phase 2 of the certification process, individuals must observe and participate as a student in any course or workshop they are being certified to teach. Prior to teaching on their own, each participant must also team teach the course with a certified instructor.

To complete the second phase of the Certified Trainer Process, trainers must within two years of selection, complete the following three courses:

1. A four day course in Content Development that helps participants learn how to think through a training program in a systematic manner;

2. A three day course in Needs, Objectives, and Evaluation designed to help participants develop and measure the effectiveness of training programs; and

3. A three day course in Teaching Techniques II focusing on skills and knowledge beyond that taught in the first teaching techniques course (e.g., advanced listening and questioning techniques, adult learning principles, group involvement techniques, etc.)

Phase 3 of the Certified Trainer Process is known as the monitoring phase. Certified trainers receive evaluation data from Instructor Evaluation Forms and undergo annual formal Certified Trainer Review by Management Education and Training staff. In addition, if the instructor has not taught the course at least four times in the preceding twelve month period, the trainer must team teach the course with a Management Education and Training section staff member.

COMMONWEALTH EDISON COMPANY - PRODUCTION TRAINING CENTER

Company Profile

The Commonwealth Edison Company provides electrical service to approximately 70% of the residents of the state of Illinois. The bulk of its customers reside within the Chicago metropolitan area. Generating capacity is produced by ten fossil fuel and six nuclear generating plants. Because of the controversial nature of the use of nuclear energy, it is essential that training is efficient and effective.

Staff at the Commonwealth Edison Production Training Center, located in Wilmington Illinois, are committed to providing the best performance-based training available in the nuclear power industry. Commonwealth Edison is a member of the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO), a voluntary accrediting organization. Maintaining INPO accreditation is crucial. The Production Training Center concentrates its efforts on providing training for power plant operators, various technical personnel, maintenance personnel, and instructors. Training is provided for approximately 3,000 trainees each year.

Instructor Certification

Instructor training at Commonwealth Edison is viewed as vitally important. As such, there is a thorough and well-documented instructor certification process. There are approximately 370 certified instructors working for Commonwealth Edison. About 100 of these instructors work at the Production Training Center, and the others work at the 16 generating stations.

Instructor trainees come to the Production Training Center from a variety of positions throughout the company with diverse educational and job backgrounds. They are highly qualified subject matter experts who show potential as instructors. The core of the instructor certification process at Commonwealth Edison is the Basic Instructor and Advanced Instructor courses.

Certification as a "Level I Instructor" requires several steps. First, the trainee must pass comprehensive performance tests included in the Basic Instructor Course.

The Basic Instructor Course is 80 hours in length and focuses on the practical application of educational theories and precepts. The course has been recognized for its excellence in the nuclear power industry and has attracted trainees from other companies in the nuclear power generating business. Each trainee has a well organized and comprehensive course manual. A comprehensive list of subjects are taught to students in the course which focus on stand-up instructional skills, teaching methods, OJT strategies, and the development and use of lesson plans and learning aids. INPO guidelines for instructor training contain an extensive list of skills and competencies. In order to maintain accreditation through INPO, the Basic Instructor Course incorporates these guidelines into its objectives.

Second, the new instructor must audit a course before teaching it. After auditing the course, the instructor is provided an apprenticeship opportunity to teach a portion of the course.

Third, new instructors are evaluated by Production Training Center staff and training department staff at the instructors' work sites. Once this process is completed, initial certification as a "Level I Instructor" is obtained. Level I Certification allows the individual to conduct instruction without immediate supervision. Certification is maintained through annual performance evaluations and continuing instructor and technical training.

The Advanced Instructor Course is designed for individuals whose primary responsibilities will be the supervision of instructors, maintenance of accreditation, evaluation, and administrative duties. The course is 80 hours in length and concentrates on meeting and dealing with regulatory procedures and documentations, and the management and evaluation of programs and instructors. The Advanced Instructor Course is required for individuals who will become lead instructors.

One and two day seminars are also offered for the continuing education of instructors. Seminars focus on topics such as test construction, computer literacy, and software-specific instruction.

Instructors are evaluated by trainees on a continuing basis and test results are used to trend instructor weaknesses. Input is also solicited from supervisors on the impact of training on on-the-job performance.

ARTHUR ANDERSEN AND COMPANY

Company Profile

With more than 51,000 personnel, Arthur Andersen and Company provides professional services globally in 243 locations through two business units: Arthur Andersen Accounting, Audit, and Tax Services and Andersen Consulting (Information Consulting Services). An integral part of the firm's broad-based formula for success is the desire to excel in the training area. The Arthur Andersen methodology assures not only that training is delivered efficiently and effectively, but that development is linked to the firm's business goals. Almost 9% of worldwide revenues is spent annually on professional development. In terms of a financial investment, the firm spends an average of $28,000 on education per professional during the first five years.

Arthur Andersen is unique among professional service organizations with its worldwide training facility - the Center for Professional Education- located in St. Charles, Illinois. In 1988, approximately 40,000 people received training through the company's Professional Education Division. Professionals from offices worldwide participate in more than a million hours of training (schools, seminars, and workshops) each year. Over the last decade

the Arthur Andersen Professional Education Division has received numerous awards for excellence in training design.

The vast majority of training is conducted in the three Arthur Andersen practice areas - Accounting and Audit, Tax, and Management Information Consulting. In addition, training is conducted in two other areas. Industry Education is provided to develop an in-depth understanding of each client's business field (e.g., banking, construction, healthcare, manufacturing, etc.). Management Development training is also conducted.

Arthur Andersen does not have full-time instructors. With the exception of Management Development training, all instruction is conducted by "practicing professionals". They are partners and managers who have current, hands-on experience related to the subject. Day in and day out they practice what they are teaching. For example, an audit class is taught by an auditor. Courses are designed and developed by Professional Education Division instructional design experts who know that someone may teach it once and may not come back to teach it again for two or more years. Most teaching assignments are one week long. The longest teaching assignment anyone ever gets in the firm is three weeks. Schools are always team taught and there is a lead instructor who is usually the more senior and almost always has taught other schools. To insure instructor quality, an instructor certification process is used.

Instructor Certification

Anyone in the firm who is likely to be teaching is expected to take the Instructor Skills Workshop conducted by the Professional Education Division as part of their training. In addition, they are given a "refresher" or an overview when they come in to teach. The overview is geared specifically to what they will be teaching.

The purpose of the Instructor Skills Workshop is to help people become more effective instructors of adults. The workshop builds the confidence of instructors while teaching them techniques for handling classroom situations. Some topics include: adult learner characteristics; how to prepare, conduct and close instruction using lecture, discussion and small group activities. The workshop is 16 hours and is taught by two specially trained instructors. The attendees have an opportunity to practice teaching three times and are videotaped and given specific feedback. Average class size is 20.

The Instructor Skills Overview has the same goals as the full workshop. There are two types of intended audiences: 1) inexperienced instructors who will be teaching a technical school within the next few days, or 2) experienced instructors who need a refresher. The same topics are covered as in the full workshop. The session lasts anywhere from two to four hours and is facilitated by one experienced instructor. Most of the content is delivered via a videotape. Participants practice teaching one time, also being videotaped and critiqued. Average class size is 20.

Arthur Andersen can call upon thousands of practicing professionals to teach courses in the Accounting and Audit, Tax, and Management Information Consulting areas and prepare them through the Instructor Skills Workshop and

the Instructor Skills Overview process. However, there are not as many people in the firm who have a management development background who understand and were formally trained in areas such as human relations, interpersonal skills, communications, etc. Therefore, external consultants are engaged to teach these courses (Arthur Andersen practicing professionals often co-teach these courses). The certification of Management Development instructors follows a different process.

The purpose of this process is to acquaint participants with the Arthur Andersen culture and to assess their instructing skills and content knowledge. Individuals are invited to attend the certification sessions based on a resume review and a telephone interview. In general the audience includes experienced consultants with advanced degrees in Communication, Psychology, or Human Resource Management. The session is 40 hours and includes: 1) orientation to the firm, 2) expectations about teaching style, 3) participation in mock sessions, 4) practice teachbacks of those sessions, and 5) videotaping and critiquing. Participants go through this process three times in one week and a selection is made. Those selected return for an additional three days six weeks later in order to conduct more complete teachbacks and for final selection. Average class size is 20.

Arthur Andersen has approximately 100 certified Management Development instructors in the United States. It is individuals from this management development group who train the instructors for the Accounting and Audit, Tax, and Management Information Consulting schools.

BELLCORE TEC

Company Profile

Bell Communications Research, Inc. (Bellcore) was organized in 1983 as a centralized organization in connection with the court ordered divestiture of American Telephone and Telegraph Company. Bellcore provides research, engineering, and other services to its owner-clients — the local telephone companies of Ameritech Corporation, Bell Atlantic Corporation, BellSouth Corporation, NYNEX Corporation, the Pacific Telesis Group, Southwestern Bell Corporation, and U S West, Inc. Bellcore Training and Education Center (Bellcore TEC) is the training arm of Bellcore.

Bellcore TEC, located in Lisle, Illinois is a full service, self-contained training facility. It was originally established in 1968 as the Bell System Center for Technical Education to meet critical education and training needs identified by the engineering community. The mission of Bellcore TEC is to be a cost effective means of providing job relevant, high quality, up-to-date training to help the operating companies maintain industry leadership.

Training opportunities focus on allowing employees to develop maximum knowledge and skills consistent with company goals and employees' career paths. Bellcore TEC offers more than 400 courses that cover thirty technical and

specialized management areas geared primarily toward telecommunications managers in entry through executive level positions. Approximately 32,000 students attend Bellcore TEC courses each year. Course length ranges from a few days to several weeks.

Trainer Recruitment

Individuals from Bellcore TEC's client-owner companies who are highly skilled in specialized areas (subject matter experts) come to the Center on a 3 to 4 year rotational basis to learn, teach, and develop courses on a wide variety of telecommunications topics. As incentives to a training assignment, Bellcore TEC offers telecommunications employees opportunities to broaden their perspectives on communications issues to a national frame of reference; expand their area of expertise through training at Bellcore TEC's state-of-the-art laboratories; develop managerial and instructional skills; and build networks within Bellcore and the Bell operating companies. Trainers then return to their parent companies richer in technological expertise, instructional skills, and leadership abilities.

Trainer Preparation

After accepting a training assignment at Bellcore TEC, individuals are assigned to a team comprised of "learning technologists" (instructional design experts) and other subject matter experts. These teams are responsible for developing training programs using a process called the Training Development Standards. There are seven "phases" to the training development process. The process begins with an analysis of the need for a specific training development project and ends with an evaluation of the training effectiveness. The Training Development Standards are based on the principles of systems development technology (analyze, develop, implement, evaluate) as applied to instruction.

Subject matter experts are instrumental throughout the training development process. However, their role is highlighted during the implementation stage when they are called upon to deliver instruction. Prior to conducting training, these individuals are required to participate in two workshops, each one week in length, designed to help insure instructor effectiveness.

Instructor Skills Workshop (Teach 1) is for newcomers to the training profession who have responsibility for delivering adult instruction in a corporate setting. Current instructors, managers of instructors and course developers also benefit from attending the course. The overall objective of the course is to help participants master the basic skills and knowledge required to become an effective instructor. Through lectures, videotaping of extensive platform practice and group feedback, the novice becomes comfortable in administering a variety of instructional techniques and delivering presentations in a classroom setting.

Topics covered in the course focus on adult learning theory applied to the classroom environment and the four-step instructional process which focuses upon lecturing and leading discussions. Platform practice and group feedback

prepare potential instructors to: deliver a lecture-based presentation; lead a discussion; develop listening skills and questioning techniques; and understand and manage group member roles and group development in the classroom.

Advanced Instructor Skills Workshop (Teach 2) is for new instructors, their supervisors and managers of course developers. The course is scheduled to occur one week after the Instructor Skills Workshop. The overall purpose of the course is to refine the delivery skills and knowledge acquired in the Instructor Skills Workshop (Teach 1) through additional platform practice sessions and group feedback. Three full days are devoted to lesson delivery with class members, the instructor, and videotaped sessions providing in-depth feedback on techniques. Participants are presented with and practice techniques that further enhance learning and development in the classroom. Some of those techniques include: group development; experiential learning (structured experience, role play, and case study); and debriefing/processing experiential learning.

ALLSTATE INSURANCE COMPANY

Company Profile

As part of the Sears organization, Allstate Insurance Company and its subsidiary companies offer scores of products and services accessible to customers through a diversified distribution system. Education is being increasingly recognized as an integral ingredient in attaining long-range strategic business objectives. Allstate's 58,000 employees are knowledge workers who need the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills which ready them to deal with growing complexities and increasing competition and to build the flexibility needed for success.

Allstate is committed to accelerating the development of its knowledge workers through a company-sponsored training and education process. At the forefront of the commitment to education and training is the Division of Corporate Development and Training and the Allstate Education Center located at company headquarters in Northbrook, Illinois. The mission of Corporate Development and Training is to serve as a leading edge resource in supporting others charged with education and training responsibilities at every level within Allstate. More specifically, Corporate Development and Training focuses its energies in several strategic human resource development areas: frontline management development; the use of technology to deliver training products or services; and administration and tracking of human resource development activities.

There are approximately 40 professional staff members in Corporate Development and Training including administrative support and training consultants. Backgrounds and experience vary. Most new staff have advanced degrees in Organizational Development, Instructional Design, or Education.

Trainers at Allstate are not formally "certified". However, with the growth in the need for and the importance of training and education, the company believes it is essential that the skills and ability to train be imparted to more than just a core of professional trainers. Hence, the Corporate Development and Training Division inaugurated a Training Skills Workshop ten years ago.

Trainer Preparation

The purpose of the Training Skills Workshop is to spread the capability to train employees beyond the boundaries of the Corporate Development and Training Division and beyond the boundaries of the Home Office environment. Trainers from around the country receive basic training skills and techniques through their participation in the Training Skills Workshop. The workshop is a means to enable the Allstate companies to develop in-house training staff.

Training Skills Workshops are typically 4-1/2 days in length and are conducted on average four times per year. Twenty to twenty-five employees participate in each workshop. In addition, requests from field offices for Corporate Development and Training to conduct Training Skills Workshops for a particular office are not uncommon. The only prerequisite is that the employee have a significant training responsibility within his or her respective organization. Role playing, participant presentations, and videotaping are important elements of the workshop. More specifically, facilitation skills, group involvement in the learning process, and presentation skills are stressed.

SUMMARY

There is, to date, no professional certification program for trainers in business and industry. However, there is some agreement on the body of knowledge that constitutes the field and the competencies required of its practitioners. Professionals in the field are increasingly able to point to a documented body of knowledge and skills on which their practice is based.

Two comprehensive studies sponsored by the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) - Models for Excellence (McLagan, 1983) and Models for HRD Practice (McLagan 1989) - have provided a fairly widely accepted list of competencies for the HRD practitioner and have specified those needed by instructors. Another comprehensive study - Instructor Competencies: The Standards - conducted by the International Board of Standards for Training, Performance, and Instruction (IBSTPI, 1988) has also developed a similar widely accepted list of competencies for instructors. The extent to which competencies identified through these studies are taught in the company-sponsored trainer certification programs described in this paper follows. A summary of the processes used in these programs is also presented.

Critical Competencies

The following chart displays which competencies identified through the comprehensive research studies cited above are taught in each of the company-sponsored trainer certification programs described in this paper. The summary represents judgments based on information gleaned through interviews, observation, and document analysis. However, differences regarding availability or proprietary nature of information may cause this summary to be only partially complete in some cases.

Competency	Company				
Models for Excellence (ASTD, 1983)	Deere	ComEd	ArAnd	Bel	All
Adult learning understanding	x	x	x	x	x
Computer competence		x			
Feedback skill	x	x	x	x	
Group process skill	x	x	x	x	x
Intellectual versatility					
Presentation skills	x	x	x	x	x
Relationship versatility	x	x			
T and D techniques understanding	x	x	x	x	x
Models for HRD Practice (ASTD, 1989)					
Technical Competencies	Deere	ComEd	ArAnd	Bel	All
Adult learning understanding	x	x	x	x	x
Career development understanding	x				
Competency identification skills	x	x		x	
Computer competence		x			
Electronic systems skills					
Facilities skills					
Objectives preparation	x	x		x	
Performance observation skills	x	x	x	x	
Subject matter understanding	x	x	x	x	x
T and D theories/techniques understanding		x	x		x
Research skills	x				
Business Competencies					
Business understanding					
Cost-benefit analysis skill		x			
Delegation skill		x			
Industry understanding			x		
Organization behavior understanding					

	Deere	ComEd	ArAnd	Bel	All
Organization development techniques					
Organization understanding					
Project management skill					
Records management skill					
Interpersonal Competencies					
Coaching skills	x	x		x	
Feedback skill	x	x	x	x	
Group process skill	x	x	x	x	x
Negotiation skill					
Presentation skill	x	x	x	x	x
Questioning skill	x	x	x	x	x
Relationship building skills	x	x	x	x	x
Writing skills					
Intellectual Competencies					
Data reduction skills					
Information search skill	x			x	
Intellectual versatility					
Model-building skill					
Observing skill					
Self-knowledge	x	x	x	x	
Visioning skill					
The Standards (IBSTPI, 1988)					
Analyze course materials and learner information		x	x		
Assure preparation of instructional site					
Establish and maintain instructor credibility	x	x	x	x	
Manage the learning environment	x	x	x	x	x
Demonstrate effective communication skills	x	x	x	x	x
Demonstrate effective presentation skills	x	x	x	x	x
Demonstrate effective questioning techniques	x	x	x	x	x
Respond to needs for feedback	x	x	x	x	x
Provide positive reinforcement and motivation	x	x	x	x	x
Use instructional methods appropriately	x	x	x	x	x
Use media effectively	x	x	x		
Evaluate learner performance	x	x			
Evaluate delivery of instruction	x	x			
Report evaluation information	x	x			

Process Summary

Specific procedures vary among the five company-sponsored trainer certification/preparation programs described in this paper. However, as is evidenced from the following chart, there is a great deal of similarity among the basic procedures used.

Procedure	Deere	ComEd	ArAnd	Bel	All
Use subject matter experts as instructors	x	x	x	x	x
Basic classroom instruction	x	x	x	x	x
Advanced classroom instruction	x	x		x	
Practice teaching (apprenticeship)	x	x			
Co-instruct (initially)	x		x	x	
Audit course prior to teaching	x	x			
Continuing seminars for professional development		x		x	
Performance evaluations	x	x	x	x	x

Vocational teacher educators who are preparing students for training and development positions in business and industry can learn a great deal about the appropriateness of their programs by examining company-sponsored trainer certification programs. This description sheds some light on the question of whether or not one academic program can prepare trainers for positions in various types of companies. Based on the descriptions provided in this paper, there appears to be a common body of knowledge and set of skills companies expect their trainers to possess regardless of business or industrial classification. If students come to university trainer preparation programs with appropriate subject matter expertise and knowledge of a business environment, there is every reason to believe they can be taught the knowledge and skills deemed important to the profession.

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